

Message Text

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TAGS: MCAP, MOPS, XF, US, NL

SUBJECT: SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S MEETING WITH
DEFENSE MINISTER VREDELING, NOVEMBER 5

1. SUMMARY: DURING MEETING WITH SECDEF NOV 5, DEFMIN VREDELING EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH NATO RATIONALIZATION STUDIES AND EMPHASIZED GON NOT USING STUDIES AS EXCUSE TO REDUCE DEFENSE EXPENDITURES. SECDEF EXPRESSED ESTEEM FOR GON ME PERFORMANCE AND SAID USG READY TO CONSIDER SYMPATHETICLY GON REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN CONNECTION OIL BOYCOTT. SECDEF EMPHASIZED VARIOUS LESSONS ME HOSTILITIES HAD TAUGHT ESPECIALLY NEED FOR SUBSTANTIAL CONVENTIONAL SHIELD WITH ALTERED ASSORTMENT OF HARDWARE CONCENTRATING ON DEFENSIVE WEAPONS VREDELING SAID ME CONFLICT INDICATED NEED FOR RE-EXAMINATION OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUN/MISSILE MOX WITHIN ALLIANCE. SECDEF AGREED. SECDEF SUGGESTED CHANGES IN STYLIZED DPC/NPG MEETINGS TO PROVIDE MORE GENUINE EXCHANGE OF VIEWS. END SUMMARY.

2. VREDELING, REFERRING TO CURRENT STUDIES RE DIVISION OF TASKS IN NATO, SAID AIR FORCE STUDY SEEMED TO BE GOING WELL AND HE ANTICIPATED SAME WITH NAVY STUDY, BUT LAND FORCES STUDY, CONCENTRATING ON LANCE, WAS GIVING DUTCH SOME PROBLEMS. HE DID NOT THINK THAT BY BUYING
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LANCE DUTCH WOULD BE PROCEEDING IN RIGHT DIRECTION. ON OTHER HAND, DUTCH WERE NOT USING RATIONALIZATION AS EXCUSE TO REDUCE THEIR DEFENSE EFFORT. SECRETARY RESPONDED THAT RATIONALIZATION IS ONE OF MOST PROFITABLE

WAYS FOR ALLIANCE TO PROCEED, AS WE ALL MUST ACHIEVE MORE DEFENSE CAPABILITY WITH AVAILABLE FUNDING. HE COMMENTED THAT DUTCH DECISION RE LANCE SHOULD FLOW FROM STRATEGY OF THE ALLIANCE.

3. AFTER NOTING RECENT US CRITICISM OF EUROPEAN REACTION DURING ME CRISIS, SECRETARY EXPRESSED HIGHEST US REGARD FOR PERFORMANCE OF NETHERLANDS. REFERRING TO THE GROWING OIL PROBLEM, HE SAID US WOULD CONSIDER RESPONDING SYMPATHETICALLY TO ANY DUTCH REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE.

4. SECRETARY FELT THAT MIDDLE EAST HAD RE-EMPHASIZED ALLIANCE'S NEED FOR SUBSTANTIAL CONVENTIONAL SHIELD WITH AN ALTERED ASSORTMENT OF HARDWARE, EMPHASIZING DEFENSIVE WEAPONS. HE NOTED IN THIS REGARD ISRAELIS' CONCERN OVER TECHNICAL COMPETENCE OF ARABS' SAM-6 AND 7 MISSILES AND ANTI-TANK WEAPONS. HE FELT ALLIANCE CAN AND MUST LEARN TO DO BETTER IN THESE AREAS. ADMIRAL MOORER SAID ECM DOES NOT HAVE A HIGH ENOUGH PRIORITY THROUGHOUT ALLIANCE AND THIS MUST BE CHANGED IF WE ARE TO FULFILL OUR NEED TO CONTROL THE BATTLEFIELD. EVEN THEN, HOWEVER, THERE REMAINS THE REQUIREMENT FOR A STANDOFF (AIR-TO-GROUND) CAPABILITY.

5. SECRETARY SAID HE FAVORED BOTH DIVISION OF LABOR IN THE ALLIANCE AND DIVISION IN DEVELOPMENT OF WEAPONS THEMSELVES.

6. SECRETARY AGREED WITH VREDELING'S COMMENT THAT ISRAELIS HAD MET UNEXPECTED TECHNOLOGY ON PART OF ARABS IN THE FIGHTING AND THAT A TACTICAL INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITY WAS MANDATORY IN ADDITION TO THE US' IMPRESSIVE SATELLIT INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITY, SECRETARY COMMENTED THAT INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION PRIOR TO ME CONFLICT HAD BEEN EXCELLENT BUT THAT ESTIMATING HAD BEEN BAD. WE HAD ASSUMED ISRAELIS WERE EXPERTS ON ARAB CAPABILITY AND INTENTIONS AND HAD PUT
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WEIGHT ON WHAT ISRAELIS HAD SAID. BUT ISRAELIS HAD MISREAD SITUATION, BASING THEIR THINKING ON 1967 WAR.

7. SECRETARY SAID US FORTUNATELY HAD MOVED AHEAD WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANTI-TANK MISSILES AND THAT ISRAELIS, USING NEW US HARDWARE SUPPLIED DURING HOSTILITIES, HAD BEEN ABLE TO REDRESS THE ARAB QUANTITATIVE SUPERIORITY IN ARMOR. VREDELING NOTED THAT IF ALLIANCE LOST ITS ANTI-TANK SUPERIORITY, THE SOVIETS WOULD BE ON THE RHINE.

8. GENERAL WIJTING, CHAIRMAN OF DUTCH JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE, NOTED THAT DUTCH LOOKED AT THINGS VERY MUCH THE SAME WAY THE US DID. AS EXAMPLE THEY

HAD ASKED US FOR ECM SOME SIX YEARS AGO BUT FOR VARIOUS REASONS HAD NOT GOTTEN WHAT THEY WANTED UNTIL THREE YEARS AGO. HE SAID WHILE WE CANNOT ALWAYS BE COMPARED TO CENTRAL EUROPE, ONE VALID COMPARISON IS NEED FOR AIRCRAFT SHELTERS. IT WAS NECESSARY FOR EACH MEMBER OF THE ALLIANCE, AFTER COMPLETING ITS OWN EVALUATION OF THE CONFLICT, TO EXCHANGE INFORMATION, THUS PERMITTING AN OVERALL EVALUATION OF THE CONFLICT AND DISSEMINATION OF LESSONS LEARNED FROM IT. ADMIRAL MOORER AGREED.

9. SECRETARY SAID ALLIED AIR AND ANTI-TANK WEAPONS SHOULD PROVIDE THE WEST WITH AN EDGE, AND WHILE WE CAN NEVER EXPECT TO COMPLETELY AVOID SURPRISE, EXPERIENCES IN THE ME AND VIET-NAM HAD DEMONSTRATED THAT OUR TECHNICAL ADVANCES WERE MORE CHALLENGING TO OUR ADVERSARIES THAN THEIRS WERE TO US. VREDELING COMMENTED THAT THE ME CONFLICT HAD DEMONSTRATED INCREASING CAPABILITIES OF ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILES AND THEREFORE HE THOUGHT THE ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUN/MISSILE MIX SHOULD BE LOOKED AT. SECRETARY AGREED, ADDED THAT MOBILITY OF THESE WEAPONS HAD INJECTED A NEW ELEMENT, AND CONCLUDED WE MUST MAKE BETTER USE OF ALLIANCE R&D.

10. SECRETARY NOTED THAT ISRAELIS HAD DEMONSTRATED SURPRISING FLEXIBILITY WHILE ARABS, WHO HAD IMPROVED THEIR TACTICS, WERE STILL UNABLE TO DEMONSTRATE STRATEGIC FLEXIBILITY. ADMIRAL MOORER POINTED TO
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ISRAELIS' GREAT ADVANTAGE IN PILOT MANPOWER, HAVING HAD TWICE AS MANY TRAINED PILOTS AS AIRCRAFT SO THAT THEY COULD FLY MANY MORE MISSIONS THAN ARABS, WHO HAD MORE PLANES.

11. TURNING TO FORMAT FOR DPC/NPG MEETINGS, SECRETARY SAID HE FELT THESE WERE TOO STYLIZED AND SHOULD BE ALTERED TO ALLOW MORE INFORMAL DISCUSSION. VREDELING FELT THAT LEBER AND CARRINGTON HAD TRIED THIS AT DPC, BUT HE DID NOT THINK THIS WAS AS FEASIBLE AT NPG MEETINGS. SECRETARY SAID SOME TOPICS THAT MINISTERS WISH TO DISCUSS IN DEPTH SHOULD APPEAR ON AGENDA, AND THAT MAJOR DIFFICULTY FOR ALLIANCE WAS THAT IT DID NOT ALWAYS DISCUSS ITS PROBLEMS BECAUSE OF POLITICAL OR NATIONAL SENSITIVITIES; NO ONE SHOULD TAKE OFFENSE AT SUCH MEETINGS JUST BECAUSE THERE ARE LESSONS TO BE LEARNED OR RE-LEARNED. WE MUST BUILD SHELTERS AND UTILIZE OUR AIR ASSETS, LESSONS LEARNED YEARS AGO BUT ABOUT WHICH WE HAVE PROCRASTINATED.

12. SENDING OF THIS MESSAGE WAS AUTHORIZED BY SECRETARY SCHLESINGER, WHO DID NOT HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW IT PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR WASHINGTON.

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